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Volume 4, Edition 3

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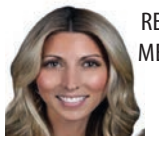
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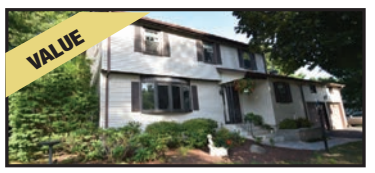

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267 HOG HILL ROAD, MIDDLE HADDAM $274,900
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RECENT SALES

47 Lake Road, Hebron

121 Tryon St., S. Glastonbury

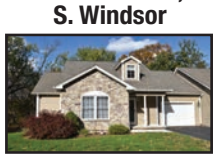
149 Naubuc Ave., E. Hartford

87 West Clark St. W. Haven,

229 Old Farm, S. Windsor

223 Pickerel Lake, Colchester

51 Delmont, Manchester


71 Nina's Way, Manchester

16 Rivendell, Marlborough

37 Cedar Ridge, Hebron

29 Sunset, Lebanon

476 NAUBUC AVE., GLASTONBURY $159,900
Commercial/Residential options, older house oncorner lot with much potential Zoned as "Town Center Mixed use". 12.080 Sq Ft Lot, additional land available total package $260,000 MLS# G10150029

335 CABIN ROAD, COLCHESTER $249,900
3 yr Young Raised Ranch, Open Floor Plan, Kit/DR/LR w/ 10 ft. ceilings, 3 BRs & Lower Level w/ recently finished Family Room, fenced yard w/Deck MLS# G10146392

437 MOODUS ROAD, EAST HAMPTON $274,900
Raised Ranch w/ 3 room In-Law Apartment, Large lot w/ In-ground Pool, Main house has remodeled Kitchen, w/ SS Appliances, Finished Lower level w/ Fireplace & Mini Kit plus ½ bath. MLS # G10123909

13 HAWTHORNE RD, E. HAMPTON $214,900
Lake Pocotopaug yr round water front home, large combo Dining Area & Fam Rm w/ Vaulted Ceilings, lake views from oversized private deck. MLS# G10116114

40 FELICIA BARBER, COLCHESTER $369,900
Beautiful cul-de-sac Colonial. Remodeled Kit with Granite Counters, Tile Backsplash, Island w/Granite, 1st Fl FR w/ FP, LR/DR, (3) BRS, Master Walk-In, Master Bath. Loft Area, LL Entertainment Room, In-Ground Pool, Large Deck with Pergola. MLS#G1015981

6 PEACHTREE TERR., FARMINGTON $329,900
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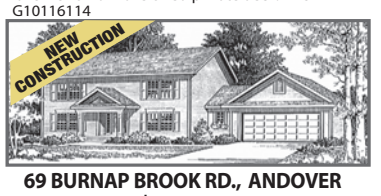

69 BURNAP BROOK RD., ANDOVER $359,900
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49 AMES, HEBRON $479,900
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51 AMES, HEBRON, $849,900
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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"I was the only kid in the cast. I met some really neat people." - *Adam Tortorello*

See story page 12

ON THE COVER

Members of the Glastonbury Square Dance Club execute a "four ladies chain" call.

Photo by Jennifer Senofonte
See story page 22

4 Stefanie Marco's art
8 Shopping shuffle
12 New theater
16 Walk through history
25 Mother-son team
28 Amy McCoy's book
31 People Notes
32 Slice of LIFE
34 Your thoughts
35 News roundup
37 Calendar
39 Business notes
45 Note from Nancy

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Work of art

Stefanie Marco's creativity comes out in Kindspin Designs

by Alicia B. Smith, ***Staff Writer***
and by Nancy Thompson, ***Editor***

For the past 14 years artist Stefanie Marco has had a booth at the Celebrate! West Hartford Arts and Craft Show.

Courtesy photo

Every now and then a box shows up on the doorstep of Stefanie Marco's home, left there by a friend or neighbor. Inside may be hundreds of beer bottle caps, old buttons, wine corks or keys. If the box has some old folding rulers, all the better. If someone happens to park an old Volkswagen bus outside that would be great, too. They are a favorite.

While others may toss these items in the trash, Marco, who grew up in Glastonbury and now lives in West Hartford, gives them new life as part of her artwork. She prefers to waste nothing. Old power tools, records and scraps of wood have all had their place in her designs.

"All my life I've done something creative," she said.

When she left the corporate world in 2004, art became her fulltime work.

"It's the best thing ever," she said.

With the support of her husband, Carl Lantz, Marco set up a workshop behind her home and a studio inside her house, and has been busy with her art ever since.

Some of her work can be found in her hometown at the Spicy Green Bean and at the Bin228 Gastropub, both on Hebron Avenue.

Kathy Denisiewicz, owner of the Spicy Green Bean, met Marco through the restaurant's Facebook page.

"Stephanie kept posting favorable comments, and then I started responding," Denisiewicz said. "After a year or so I wondered who she was."

She recalled running around the restaurant one day when a woman tapped her on the shoulder and introduced herself as "Stephanie."

"I didn't realize it was her," she said. "And then, sight unseen, I invited her to put some of her art in here."

Their relationship has flourished. Marco's funky art goes perfectly with The Spicy Green Bean's funky decor. "She's been selling it and bringing more in," Denisiewicz said. "Everyone here loves her stuff. She's so fantastic. Her energy and her karma and her creativity are awesome."

Explaining why she chose the name Kindspin Designs, Marco said it comes from the swirls she likes to incorporate in her work and the fact that she thinks "everyone should be kind to each other."

"I am getting inspired by everything around me," Marco said. "When I go to bed my mind is spinning" with ideas, she said.

She creates custom designs for those looking for a unique gifts or something for their home, works for private collections and pieces for businesses. Marco also does some graphic design work and photography.

Other items in her repertoire include wall hangings, mirrors, clocks, frames, jewelry, coat hooks and Lazy Susans. Her motifs include swirling designs, fish, submarines and coffee cups. Marco also enjoys turning a child's drawing into a three-dimensional piece of art.

While living in Glastonbury, Marco attended Watkinson School. Ten years ago she and her husband, a realtor, settled in West Hartford with their children, Callie Sage and Flynn, and their dog, Maple.

Now that fall has arrived Marco is back in her workshop after taking off the summer to spend with her children.

Most of Marco's works begin with a piece of wood. She developed a love for the material when she was asked by a friend to contribute some pieces to her restaurant in Middletown. When Marco visited the restaurant to see

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If there were a way for artist Stefanie Marco to find a Volkswagen bus for herself, she would do it. In the meantime, she incorporates them into her artwork.

Courtesy photos

Swirls are a fun motif found in Stefanie Marco's work.

what other artists had done she immediately noticed there was no wood.

"I went out and bought power tools and taught myself," Marco said.

Power tools are another large component of her work. If she is not using them to cut wood into various shapes for her designs, she is dismantling old power tools and using the pieces and parts in her artwork.

Any old folding rulers, even broken ones, are always being sought. She said they remind her of her father and are always on her list of items she is on the hunt to find.

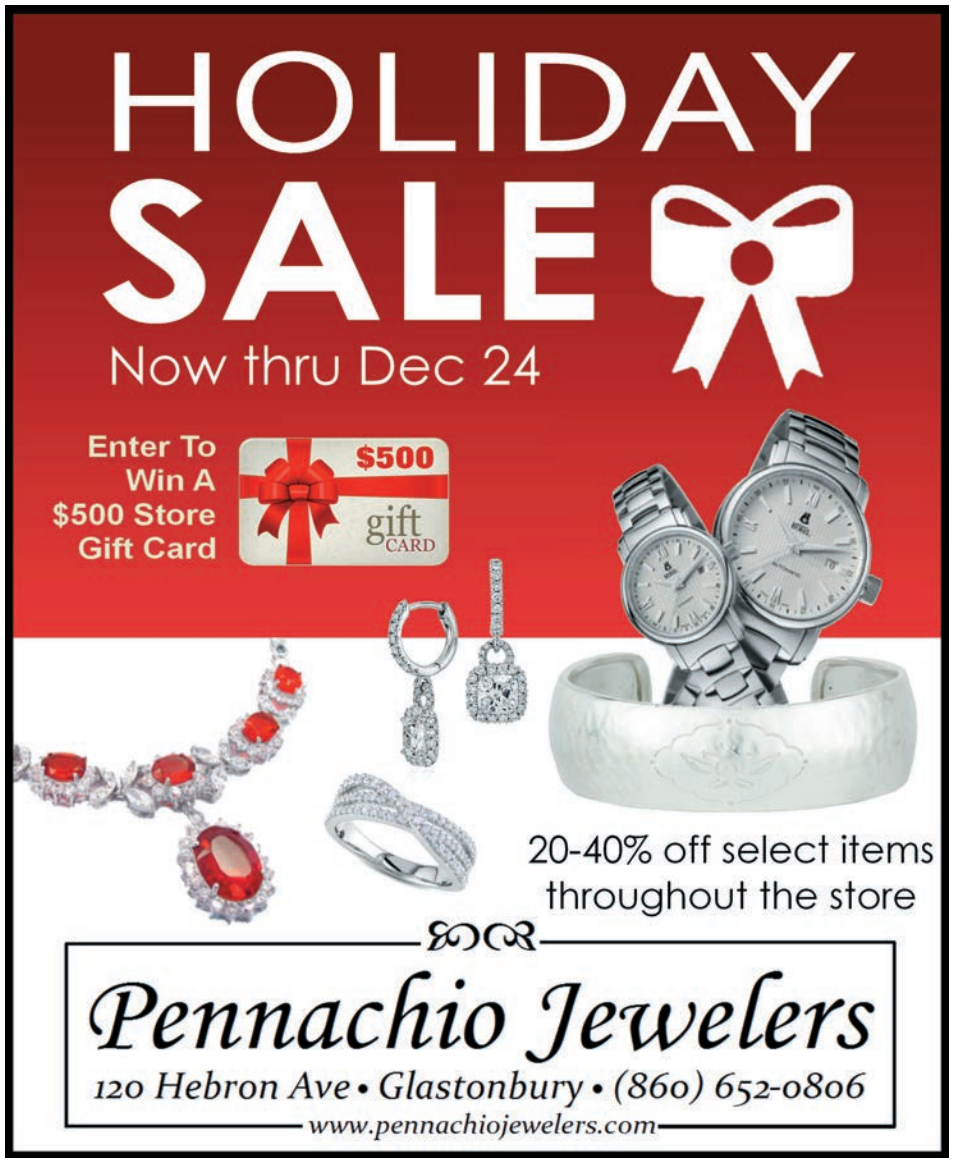
"I love when people look at something and have a connection to it," Marco said. "It's fun to hear the stories, too."

Marco, who for the past 14 years has had a booth at the Celebrate! West Hartford Arts and Crafts Show, said she enjoys listening to customers talk about who they are buying a piece of her work for or why they like a certain item. Sometimes she hears people talk about how something they see in her work reminds them of their own life. Clients will often share why they want a certain item incorporated into a custom piece.

When she is ready to work on an idea, she checks to be sure she has all the supplies she will need. Often she will sketch her design on the piece of wood before she makes a cut. After sanding and priming the wood, she adds layers of bright, colorful paint.

"It makes me feel good," she said of using as many bright and bold colors as she can.

Once the colors are applied, Marco will add other objects before adding a resin coating, where she works in a clean, well-ventilated space.



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"I am getting inspired by everything around me."
–Stefanie Marco

To finish each piece Marco, will trim the edges, add a hanger on the back and photograph it for her portfolio. If the piece is being put up for sale, she will add a tag.

When working on a custom piece she wants to ensure she understands what her clients are looking for and if they are open to her interpretation of the instructions.

When Marco steps away from her workshop and studio, she continues thinking about art, not only contemplating ideas for future pieces, but ways in which she can help other local artists.

Two years ago she founded the WEHA Artists Emporium in West Hartford. The idea came to her when she was working alone in her studio. She wondered how she could connect with other local artists and how they could network, sell their work and help people find local art to purchase.

The Emporium is a Facebook group, but members also meet in person twice a month.

More recently Marco organized a collaborative show at Bin 228 in Hartford, called "Wind and Water." The show runs through November 5.

"I just love coordinating shows," she said. "I feel like we inspire each other." GL

For more information on Stefanie Marco and her work, visit facebook.com/kindspindesign or kindspindesgin.com.

Courtesy photo

Kathy Deniesiwicz, owner of the Spicy Green Bean, loves the karma and creativity of Stephanie Marco's art, which is on display at her restaurant.

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Shopping shuffle

Stores move to new locations in town

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

If you're shopping in town this holiday season, you'll fine two long-time favorite stores in new locations.

Caribbean Charm has moved from Main Street to New London Turnpike next to Eric Town Square, while Nana's Infant & Children's Boutique has moved from Fox Run Mall to Caribbean Charm's previous site on Main Street.

Nana's, which opened in 2011 at 43 Welles Street in The Shoppes at Fox Run Mall, recently celebrated its fifth anniversary and has changed its focus slightly in its new location.

"I wanted the store to be the place to go for high quality and unique items for infants and children," the store's owner, Eva M. Reilly said. "The only change today is that I will specialize in infants and toddlers. I will no longer stock merchandise for the larger sizes. I will special order the larger sizes for any customer who would like the larger sizes. The major exception will be formal wear for communion apparel and accessories for both girls and boys. I will still carry all communion apparel and accessories,"

She said she moved to the Main Street location for a few reasons after her five-year contract at Fox Run Mall expired.

"The location at Fox Run Mall was too large and therefore too expensive," she said. "This location is very intimate, cozy and welcoming to my customers. I have had all positive comments and reactions which makes me love the location more. In addition my landlord is local and very attentive to any issues

Photo by Mara Dresner

Nana's Infant & Children's Boutique specializes in items for infants and toddlers

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For some, it has been a difficult year and the holidays, traditionally a time of celebration, can magnify a tragedy or loss. We've found that remembering a loved one with a special tribute or a memorial service often helps families work through difficult times. If you have lost a loved one, please join us for our holiday program and we'll take a moment to remember and celebrate that life ... together.

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which may arise."

The new store is just 600 square feet, much smaller than the previous location, which had 2,200 square feet. Glastonbury artist Roy Wrenn painted an animal mural below the front counter which has proven popular with young visitors to the store.

"Customers claim that merchandise is more visible and size-wise more appropriate for a boutique," she said. "I don't just want my customers to make a purchase. I want then to feel excited and happy with their purchase. I have actually talked customers out of purchasing an item because I did not think they would be happy with it. In the five years that I have been in business, many of my customers have become really good friends. We have shared laughter in happy times and tears for sad times. I would not want this to change. I love helping people."

Photo by Mara Dresner

Eva M. Reilly of Nana's Infant & Children's Boutique loves her new location on Main Street, formerly the home of Caribbean Charm.

Of course, the Main Street location became available because Caribbean Charm moved to a new location after owner Lauren Cheney converted long-empty office space to a boutique. The new location has several rooms and features a wide variety of merchandise, including clothing, jewelry, baby items and gifts.

Photo by Mara Dresner

This is Caribbean Charm's third location. The store started online, then moved into space at 2377 Main Street, above Daybreak Coffee.

"We wanted to start a brick and mortar store and then we evolved," Cheney said. "We just kept expanding. We had one room, and then another. Eventually, we had all the rooms filled up there."

Caribbean Charm is known for adding a personalized touch to merchandise by monogramming items such as towels, clothing and baby blankets.

"My last space on Main Street, I had a positive

Lauren Cheney converted office space for the new location for her boutique, Caribbean Charm

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Photo by Mara Dresner

Caribbean Charm carries unique gifts, jewelry, clothing and more.

overwhelming response from our customer base, so I needed to find a bigger space because we physically grew out of the space," she said. "I personally designed the spaces that we were in. I feel pleasure knowing that I leave behind a little bit of my design, [such as] the pink doors, as Caribbean Charm's signature. It allows other businesses to open right away with a beautifully designed space."

Cheney said she's selective about where she locates her shop. She does extensive remodeling to achieve the look she desires.

She said her goal is "to create energy, and not to be a chain store and represent a 'relax, enjoy and shop' environment that is inviting to new and existing customers. I am super excited about my new space as it has been my biggest project so far in my career. I invested so much to remodel to bring our new space to feel our boutique is in an atmosphere as no other store around. As you visit Caribbean Charm you will feel a taste of Paris, Greece, Newport and more."

The new location, which opened in August, features the Brighton line of handbags and jewelry. Other names the boutique carries include French Connection, Vera Bradley, Spanx, Bauble Lulu Beads, La Vie Paris, Anne Koplik Designs and Laurel-Burch.

Cheney wants to offer a special shopping experience and often offers hot cider or coffee. The shop is open Tuesday through Saturday and is staying open until 7 p.m., while in the previous location it closed at 6 p.m. During the holiday season, it'll be open seven days a week.

"I want them to feel like they're escaping and coming to shop and enjoy themselves and have a good time," she said. "It's for the sophisticated and chic fashionista. We like to offer unique items and we like to have all our customers leave with something special and with a smile on their face and wanting to come back." **GL**

Nana's Infant & Children's Boutique is located at 2235 Main Street, 860-659-8433, nanasstore.com. Caribbean Charm is located at 136 New London Turnpike next to Eric Town Square, 860-430-9909, caribbeancharm.com.

Photo by Mara Dresner

Local artist Roy Wrenn painted an animal mural for Nana's Infant & Children's Boutique's new location.

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Courtesy photo

Adam Tortorello has started White Rabbit Theatre, named after the first major role he got as a child.

Glastonbury resident starts new theater

First full-scale production is in December

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

You might say Adam Tortorello has theater in his DNA.

"It comes from my grandfather. He was in 1950s Hollywood movies, 'War of the Worlds,' 'Jailhouse Rock.' In general he did small parts. I think it was in my blood," he said. "When I was seven years old, my parents wanted me to audition for a community theater kids' show at the Crystal Theatre in Norwalk. It was 'Alice in Wonderland,' and I got the main part in that, the White Rabbit. He had the most lines, and I just fell in love with it. I'm an introverted person. I'm not the best communicator in the world. Being on stage gave me a chance to come into my own, to allow my personality to come out."

Tortorello began taking acting and vocal lessons and was cast in other shows, including in "The Sound of Music" at the Warner Theatre in 2001 and in "Me and My Girl" at the Goodspeed Opera House in 2003.

"I was the only kid in the cast. I met some really great people," he said of the experience at Goodspeed, which consisted of a performance run of 88 shows. By then, his family had settled in Glastonbury. "Smith

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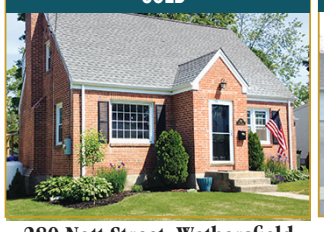
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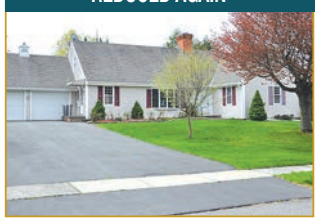
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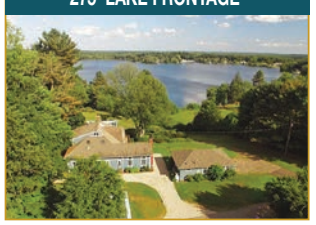
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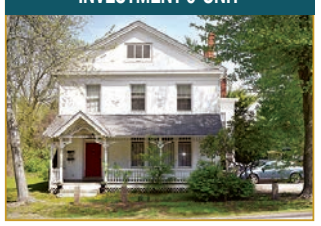
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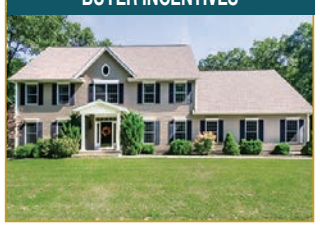
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Adam Tortorello directs Alex Flanigan, Caroline Dumond, Alexandra Laliberte and Melanie Scott, all of Glastonbury, during a rehearsal for "Grease."

Courtesy photo

Middle School had to give permission to miss Wednesdays. I would just go in the morning because we had Wednesday matinees. It was tough. We did eight shows a week. I hung in there, but my grades weren't great. I think it turned me away from theater a bit. Socially,

"My big dream would be just to impact as many people as possible in a positive way: the cast, the crew, the audience."

–Adam Tortello

it was tough not always being there. I was always a year younger than people. I'd started kindergarten young and was always small for my age. I got away from theater."

That lasted until his freshman year at Glastonbury High School when he heard an announcement

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about auditions for "West Side Story." He auditioned, was cast as one of the Jets and was once again hooked on the dramatic life, appearing on stage and serving as the GHS Drama Club president his senior year, 2007 to 2008.

He also performed as Jesus in "Godspell" and Leo Frank in "Parade," both with Cirillo Summer Theater, and Marius in "Les Miserables" with Colchester Community Theatre. He also tried his hand at directing. He was director of Glastonbury Teen Theatre Troupe from 2007 to 2008, directing "The Sound of Music," and in 2013 directed the film "Black, White, and Red All Over," which is available on YouTube.

After graduating from the University of Connecticut with a degree in English in 2015, the next show was going to be. It had a snowball effect. That turned into White Rabbit Theatre," he said.

White Rabbit Theatre, named for the first major role he received, is in rehearsals for their first big show, a production of "Grease," which will run for five performances in December at Trinity-on-Main in New Britain. The group rehearses locally at the Lutheran Church of St. Mark.

Producing a full-scale show is very different than a cabaret.

"There are a lot of expectations with 'Grease.' There are stereotypes for the characters. It brings dance to a whole new level," said Tortorello, who is serving as director and producer. "The show is great and it's iconic. A lot of us in the cast and crew

"One of the reasons I got away from professional theater and film was I saw how competitive it was and how cutthroat it was. I wanted to keep it fun."

–Adam Tortello

Tortorello came back to Glastonbury, where he's lived since 2002, and began tutoring students in everything from math and English to SAT prep and general study help.

"It's all ages. It's a lot of high school and college students, and a decent amount of elementary students as well," he said.

While he enjoys the work, he found himself looking for something more.

"My friends and I have missed doing shows. There are not as many community theater opportunities as I would have liked. That was what sprung the idea of doing a community theater company. It started as a small idea last year. We did a Disney cabaret for fun," Tortorello said.

The cabaret took place at the Lutheran Church of St. Mark in Glastonbury. Tortorello directed the cabaret and played roles such as John Smith and Hercules.

"People started asking what grew up watching on TV, so it's big on pop culture. The message and overall happenings in the show are easy to relate to. Everyone goes to high school. There's a search for identity and how you're going to operate as an adult. One of main conflicts is with Danny and Sandy, and the conflict of how to act with your friends and how to act with each other. Are you going to put on an act with each other or are you going to allow love to happen?"

There's a cast of 20, plus a crew of eight. While several actors live in Glastonbury, the show also draws talent from several other communities in the area.

"Adam is a hardworking and compassionate director. He believes in each and every cast member and wants to see them shine," said Chantel Martin, the choreographer, who met Tortorello in a class at UConn. "I love working with Adam because we are a great team. We always seem to

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be on the same page regarding strong work ethic, creative ideas and positive communication. I believe the White Rabbit Theatre group will be successful due to the friendly and talented cast, experienced production staff and the passion we all share. We all have a fun time together and I can't wait to see our production of 'Grease' on stage in December."

Tortorello has an ambitious goal for his theater company.

"Our ultimate mission is to revive low-cost community theater and make it as entertaining as possible. It doesn't matter if the actors are not being paid and aren't professional; we're working our butts off making it as good as it can possibly be," he said. "It requires all the pieces of the puzzle to work together nicely. You have to tune into what activates the audience members, what make them the most entertained, what's going to wow them. Is it going to be a special effect here and there? Is it going to be amazing blocking that made a song that much more effective? What you don't want is to be blank space or slow cues. You have to keep their interest especially in this day of technology. I don't think people are the most patient right now. You need to get them in and out in roughly two hours. You need quick cues and to be absolutely stunning in the three main [areas], acting, singing and dancing."

While Tortorello is handling producing and directing for "Grease," he doesn't see that as his role for every White Rabbit show. He hopes to be back on stage for future productions, as well as giving others the chance to direct or utilize other talents. He's also open to doing straight plays, although he admits, "musicals are my main passion."

One of his favorite plays is "Rent."

"Every time I've seen 'Rent,' it's had the effect on me. Personally, 'Rent' is the only show I know where you can't name a weak song in the show," he said. "Something about the plot clicks with you. It's about people in New York City which I love, experiencing all these different problems and coming together and struggling together. There are a lot of tearjerkers, dealing with loss and struggle and disease, and overcoming that and finding happiness. It's very powerful."

Playing Mark in "Rent" would be a dream role for him, as would portraying Tony in "West Side Story" and appearing in "Jersey Boys."

He's had to adjust his tutoring schedule while he's been in rehearsals for "Grease" because he usually tutors in the afternoons and evenings, and "Grease" rehearsals are held in the evening.

"I try to pack in jobs on the weekends," he noted.

Theater isn't Tortorello's only artistic endeavor. He's also at work on a mystery novel, on temporary hold, while he works on the show.

"It's a murder mystery with a twist. People are brought to a mansion in upstate New York and are told they cannot use any technology. They have to turn their phones in. They have no phones, no computers, no TVs. The purpose is a sociological experiment, about social compassion and kindness. The owner of the resort happens to be a big philanthropist. Friendships form, relationship form, then someone dies. And they start to question the philanthropist himself. I won't say anymore," said Tortorello, who was inspired by Agatha Christie. "Once 'Grease' ends, I'll get back to that."

He's hoping White Rabbit Theatre will produce at least one full-scale production each year, as well as some smaller shows, such as cabarets or fundraisers.

He's been enjoying the process and hopes that he can convey that spirit to audience members as well.

"One of the reasons I got away from professional theater and film was I saw how competitive it was and how cutthroat it was. I wanted to keep it fun," he said. "My big dream would be just to impact as many people as possible in a positive way: the cast, the crew, the audience. If someone sees one show, I want that to be a positive, a show they won't forget. You can step away from your real life, from reality, for a couple of hours, and just relax and enjoy the show. That's the goal." **GL**

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A walk back in history

Main Street offers a stroll through the town's past

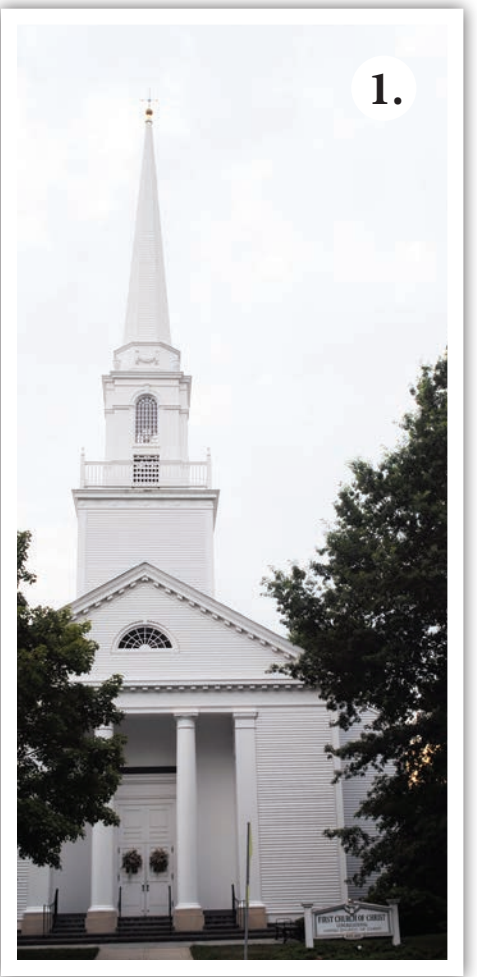
by Nancy Thompson
Editor

The Historical Society of Glastonbury is inviting residents and others to take a walk through the town's history this month. Glastonbury's Main Street is one of the most beautiful, and most historic, in the state, but the charm is easy to miss when driving, and the stories behind the homes and other buildings is not commonly known.

For example, did you know that the part of Main Street running in both directions from the town hall include structures built in the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries? Or that Glastonbury has more original colonial buildings than any other city of town in Connecticut and more than all but one other place in the U.S.? You'll have to sign up for the tour to learn where that is.

The Historical Society of Glastonbury has arranged for a total of 10 buildings – nine homes, one inn and one church – to be open on the afternoon of December 10 so their charm and their histories can be shared. In addition, hosts at some of the sites have promised seasonal decorations and music to help guests get into the holiday spirit.

The society's brochure offers many details about each of the sites. The following is an abbreviated account.



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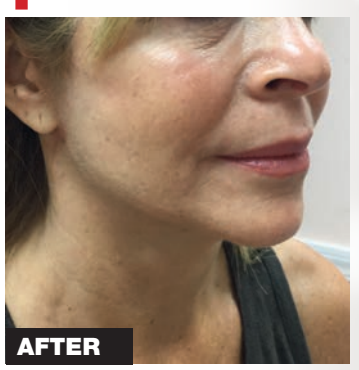

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Site 1: The First Church of Christ, 2183 Main St.

This building, the fifth structure and third location to house the congregation, was built in 1939, the year after the 1938 hurricane toppled the steeple, which crashed into the church and destroyed it. Today, the congregation is known for its music program featuring a pipe organ made by Schoenstein & Co. and often featuring other instruments during worship services.

Site 2: The Connecticut River Valley Inn, 2195 Main St.

This house, also known as the Benton-Hale House, is a twin-chimney Federal structure with a gambrel roof built in 1800. The ell in the rear of the building is believed to be the original structure, built in 1740. Recently, the home was expanded and renovated by Pat Brubaker, an artist, and opened as a bed and breakfast.

Site 3: The Hale-Carter House, 2174 Main St.

This home, built in about 1820, has five fireplaces, five bedrooms, three full and two half baths, two kitchens and several living areas. Its new owners, Lizabeth and Richard Zlatkus, installed oak floors and wood paneling everywhere to complement the existing flooring, paneling and wainscoting in the older areas.

Site 4: A new house, 2168 Main St.

When Nora Dannehy and Leonard Boyle decided to have this house built in 2015, they made sure it would be designed to fit with neighboring structures. The exterior's design is Greek Revival, as is most of the interior, with some exceptions, such as the living, cooking and eating areas on the main floor, all designed in a contemporary open floor plan.

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Site 5: The Brian Davis Home, 2162 Main St.

This home, built in the early 20th century, reflects that era's Arts and Crafts style and also resembles the Prairie Style homes that Frank Lloyd Wright was designing at the time. For many years it has been the home of Brian Davis, an architect who was the chief designer of the Connecticut State Legislative Office Building, Foxwoods Casino and Smith Middle School, his wife, Karen, and their family. Over the years Davis has found many ways to enhance his family's home while respecting its character.

Site 6: Hale-Goodrich House, 2016 Main St.

Built in 1876, this house in the French Second Empire style, replaced a red brick farmhouse owned by Timothy Hale and eventually by his son Atwater. The house has been white for most of its existence but now is painted to show off its beautiful exterior woodwork.

Site 7: Town House and Museum, 1944 Main St.

This red brick structure, built in the Greek Revival style, is the museum of the Historical Society of Glastonbury. It was built in 1840 as the town's first town hall. The town's oldest cemetery is behind the building and includes the graves of the legendary Smith sisters. The museum features exhibits from the town's history and a small gift shop where visitors can buy Glastonbury-themed items.

Photos by Nancy Thompson

Site 8: Forte-Walker-Perry House, 1995 Main St.

Built in 1973 as a two-bedroom ranch, this house underwent a major remodeling after Jeffrey Walker and his wife, Manijeh Zavareei bought it in 1996. Today, the house, described as an example of Modern Arts and Crafts design with many windows, natural wood trim in the interior and a screen-in porch. The Perry family, which bought the home in

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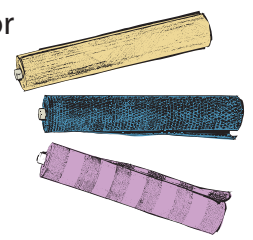

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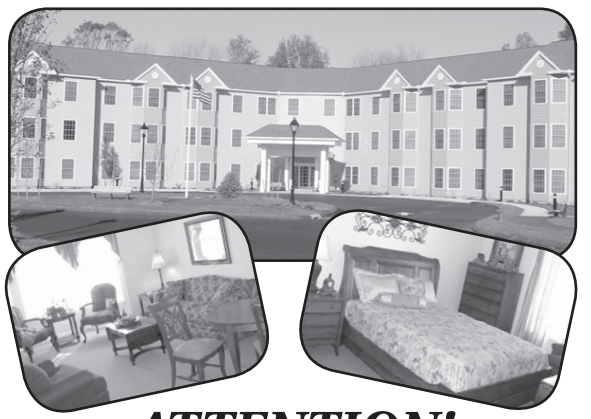

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2007, has continued to transform the house into its current condition.

Site 9: Hale-Rankin House, 2027 Main St.

This house might have been part of the underground railway that helped slaves escape, since it's know that the Samuel Rankin, a clergyman who lived here in the 1800s, was an abolitionist. The center-chimney house was built in 1754 by Benjamin Hale, the son of Timothy Hale, Jr., of 2015 Main St. and the grandfather of Atwater Hale of 2016 Main St.

Site 10: The Isaac Plummer House, 2077 Main St.

Ebenezer Plummer, a wealthy local merchant had this house built for his son, Isaac in 1770. Renovations in the 1940s revealed fireplaces and other elements that had been hidden by earlier work. The house has a "coffin door" that once opened to the outside. With a coffin door leading from the parlor to the exterior, deceased family members could be laid out in the parlor and then easily removed for burial. **GL**

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PORTLAND **$334,900**
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These dancers aren't squares

Glastonbury square dance club offers fun for all

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

Dancers stand quietly, smiling and holding hands with their partners as caller Bill Mager turns on the music. Soon they're doing grand promenades, do-si-dos, allemandes and other steps, and generally having a blast.

Welcome to the Glastonbury Square Dance Club.

The group, which started in 1960 and meets Wednesday evenings at Buttonball Lane School, draws an average of 15 to 20 people each week. Some are relative newcomers, while others, including Mager and his wife, Sarah, the club president, have been dancing for three decades or more. Many have met their spouses through square dancing.

Bill Mager recalled his first experience. "My parents square danced," he said. "They told me there was a teen dance club and that my sister and I were going to try it twice." He wasn't wild about the idea until he went and made an important discovery. "There were girls there," he said with a smile. He's

Nancy Thompson photos

Upper left: Eileen Kelly and José Salinas await the next instruction from caller Bill Mager. **Other photos:** Members of the Glastonbury Square Dance Club demonstrate steps for a group of potential new members.

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been dancing ever since.

"It's one of the world's best-kept secrets," he said. "It's really a good activity. A lot of people don't know anything about it. It's not what they remember from their third-grade gym class."

Sarah Mager went to her first square dance with a friend, thinking it would be good exercise and a stress relief. Now she and Bill travel all over the world, meeting new people and exploring new places.

Dancers used to wear traditional western garb, but these days it's optional. Jeans and T-shirts are fine. "A lot of people don't want to dress, and that's why they don't come," Sarah said. "Some like the old dress code. We're about 50-50."

Jane Casserly learned about the club while she was dating her late husband, Jim. "Some of his friends and co-workers were members of the Glastonbury Square Dance Club and they encouraged us to take the classes to learn to square dance. We found we enjoyed the classes very much and met lots of nice folks. We joined the club after finishing the classes and then were active members, going to our own club's dances, and other club's also, with other folks from the club and being 'angels' at the classes, which had moved to Buttonball School, where they are held today."

"Dancers need not have grace or rhythm to participate. If they learn to listen to the caller and focus on the choreography, dances are fun and exciting..."

–José Salinas

They continued dancing for many years after marrying in 1980 but stopped when Jim became ill. She returned last year after hearing from a friend.

"Eileen Kelly called and asked me if I remembered much from our square dancing days," she said. "I told her I wasn't sure how much I remembered and she suggested going back to the classes to see. I've found things have changed a lot since the 'old days.' You don't have to have a partner to join and you don't have to wear the traditional square dance outfits. But I've found it's still a lot of fun and also good exercise for both body and mind and you still meet lots of nice folks."

Kelly, who started dancing as a teenager and then stopped for many years, also danced with her husband until he became ill, then returned a couple of years ago with Casserly.

She said the club's "angels" – experienced dancers who help with lessons – are angels to her in a different way. "Because I can't drive out of town at night, there are at least six very kind 'angels' who call me when they are driving to out of town dances or lessons and arrange to pick me up, or we meet locally. I can't reciprocate but they are so kind and generous it doesn't seem to matter. They are not only helping me on the dance floor but getting me there as well. How grateful I am to these true angels."

She said the dancing is only one part of the fun. "The dancing is important but the friendliness, generosity, and socializing are a very big part of the square dance scene."

José Salinas was simply not interested.

"I learned about the club from my wife, Susan, during our courtship," he said. "She had been dancing for about 12 years or so before I met her. After we met, sometimes I accompanied her to lessons and

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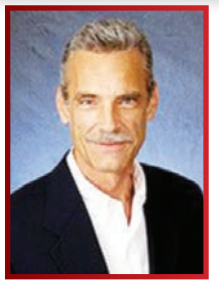

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dances. She asked me a few times to take lessons, but I refused. I told her, simply, that I was not interested. Honestly, however, I felt intimidated. It seemed like the calls were too complex and like the participants possessed a special aptitude. I later learned that those misconceptions were due to my trying to follow what the entire group of eight dancers was doing, instead of just one. Breaking it down like that makes it much easier. I've been dancing for three years now and I love it."

Salinas makes a distinction between "modern square dancing" and the older style. "The music is neither twangy nor hokey," he said. "Innovative callers like our club's Bill Mager bring a variety of popular music to our dances. Also, dancers need not have grace or rhythm to participate. If they learn to listen to the caller and focus on the choreography, dances are fun and exciting… I enjoy challenging my mind by keeping track of many things at once while dancing, listening to the caller, processing in my mind what to do, keeping track of the other dancers and maintaining a general sense of the fluidity of the back-to-back calls."

He also smiles a lot. "In essence, when I'm dancing I tend to be there – in the present – and energized. I'm not thinking about work issues or the chores at home that are waiting. I have found that all this activity releases endorphins and reduces my stress."

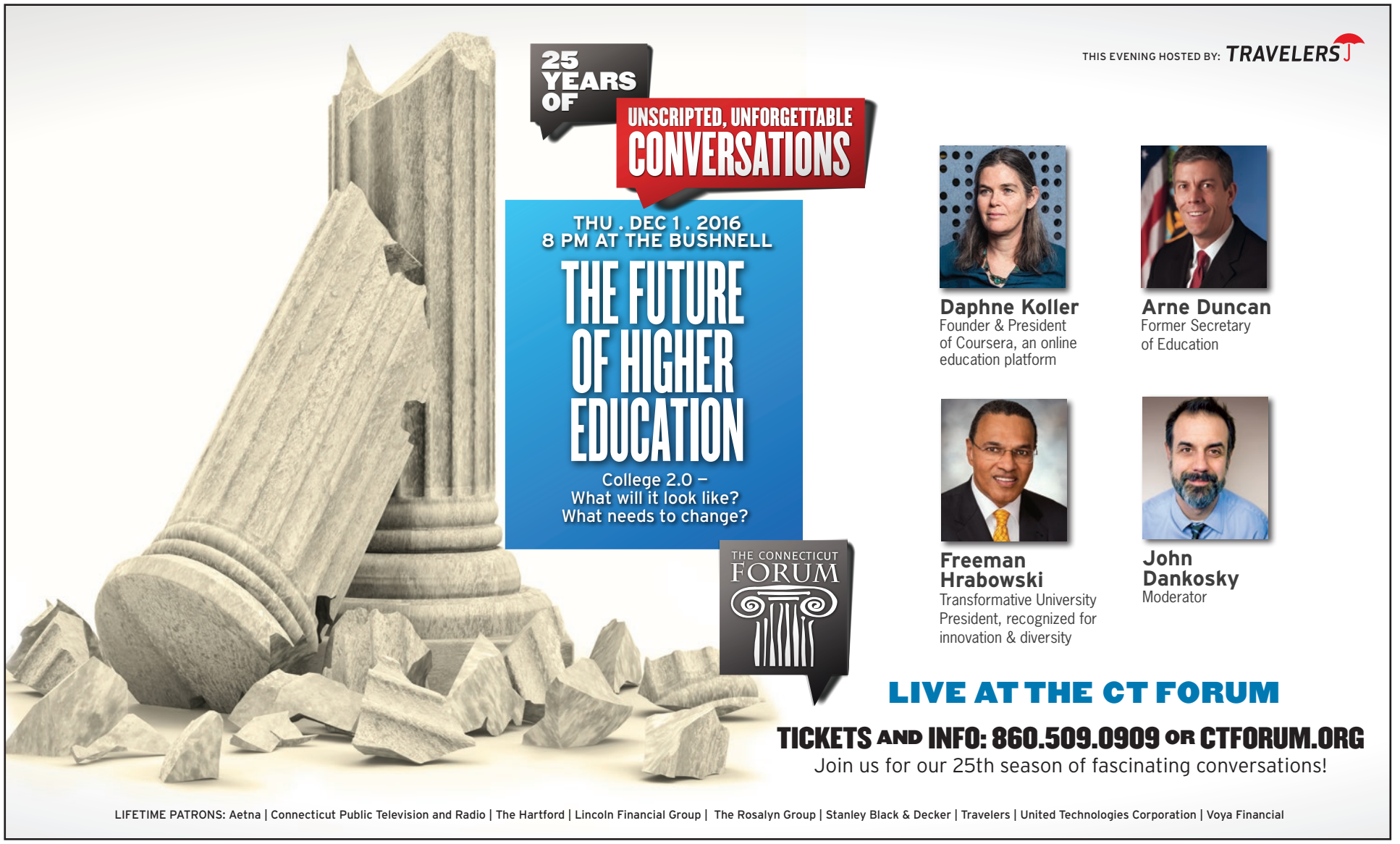
Salinas said he that while he enjoys the dancing, what he enjoys most is the bonds he's formed with some of the other dancers. "I love those guys. We often break each other up when we dance," he said. "A group of six or seven of us has traveled together to Rhode Island, New Hampshire, North Carolina and Nevada just to dance to internationally renowned callers. It's been very rewarding for me to share those experiences with these friends. We've now begun to discuss where we may want to go next year. It's really great to have this activity in town."

He said modern square dancing is a continuation of a quintessentially American folk art that is practiced – in English, without translation – around the world. **GL**

Brian Ambrose photos

Bill Mager helps direct some dancers at the Glastonbury Square Dance Club.

To learn more about the Glastonbury Square Dance Club, contact Sarah and Bill Mager at billmager@mac.com.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A tech expert at 10

Mother and son team up to promote good digital citizenship

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

David B. Newman photo

Marialice Curran and her son, Curran Dee, work together to help teachers and students use social media for the common good.

Like many 10-year-old boys, Curran Dee loves to play hockey, golf and video games. But unlike his peers, he's an internationally known speaker about kids and technology and is the "chief kid officer" of DigCitKids, where he helps parents and children develop necessary skills for the digital age.

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He was one of the featured speakers at the Digital Citizenship Summit at Twitter headquarters in San Francisco in October, has presented his ideas at a TEDxYouth talk in Massachusetts, and spoke at a Digital Citizenship event in London earlier this year.

He works alongside his mother, Marialice B.F.X. Curran, an assistant professor at the University of Saint Joseph and the founder of the Digital Citizenship Institute and co-founder of the Digital Citizen Summit, both based in Glastonbury.

"Our mission at DigCitKids is to keep asking a wider audience, 'How are you using technology every day to make a difference for your community, for other kids and for the world?' and then showing them how to get started," she said. "My goal is to promote student voice and digital citizenship for kids, by kids."

She said most of the talk about children and the internet is about what to avoid, such as sexting, cyber-bulling and trolling. By contrast, the Digital Citizenship Institute and DigCitKids work to show children how to use social media to promote social good. "Instead of the drama, we're focused on the good," she said.

For example, she said teachers at an elementary school in Houston used Curran's TED talk. When students in one of the fourth-grade classes wanted to ban plastic bags because of their threat to the environment they turned to social media. Lila Mankad, one of the students, created a petition on change.org that has been signed by nearly 1,700 concerned citizens.

In Newington, Jess Bedford is working with fourth-grade students to evaluate Internet sites and come up with activities they'd like to do using social media.

Bedford, a technology teacher for Newington Public Schools, met Marialice Curran when she was Bedford's professor at the University of Saint Joseph.

She praised Curran and his mother for their work. "Curran is an inspiration that shows kids have a voice and they want to be heard," she said. "He has inspired me to be a better teacher by thinking about how I can amplify student voice and solve real-world problems or questions they may have. DigCitKids allows for students to reflect on their choices and how they can help the world even at a young age. Maralice's passion and enthusiastic personality has inspired many and the DigCitKid movement is extremely important in teaching students of all ages how to navigate the digital world as if it is the world face to face. Making that realization that there is a person on the other side of the screen and that words are powerful and are seen farther than just a few people. Maralice attended one of my technology classes to spread the DigCit word. This opportunity sparked a conversation about cyberbullying, collaboration, and how one small act of standing up can cause a ripple effect to help stop cyber bullying."

"When kids are passionate about creating change, they need to learn with the world. That happens digitally."

–Curran Dee

Others, parents and professionals alike, agree.

Jennifer Fitzsimmons, a parent and elementary school teacher, met Marialice and Curran about a year ago at the first Digital Citizenship Summit at the University of Saint Joseph.

"That day ignited a passion for digital citizenship that was inspired by Maralice and her belief that kids like her son Curran were in dire need of guidance to use tech to be socially responsible citizens," she said. "I have been an elementary school teacher for over 20 years and I love to learn new ways to inspire students."

She said she has been impressed by Curran's courage and compassion. "He has the courage to be the voice of reason that so many kids wish they had. Many children live in fear and are unable to verbalize their true thoughts about technology, citizenship and the

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typical school today. Curran is a boy that finds the silver lining in the tech cloud of today. He advocates for students in a compassionate, kind way and embraces the 'global' society mindset. He encourages educators and students to take risks by implementing technology into their classrooms so that students will want to stay in their classrooms long after the bell has rung. He advocates for the creative mindset and allowing students to lead the learning. He truly just wants kids to love school. He also models ways that students and classrooms can use technology and learning to make the world a better place. He is the digital change I wish to see in the world."

She said she believes that DigCitKids is "the hope that we as parents have for our 21st-century learners. It is the proactive, socially appropriate, responsible way that kids can use technology to send out a hopeful message to all kids about ways to be a good online citizen. DigCitKids highlights the incredible capabilities technology can have on our society when put towards helping and bettering the lives of others. Any age, gender, race, tech level is embraced and accepted."

Judy Arzt, an instructor at the University of Saint Joseph who teaches and lectures about educational technology, has invited Marialice and Curran to her classes.

"It is very powerful to have an elementary school student speak in front of a group of teachers and to teach them tech savvy skills," she said of Curran. "His presentations help teachers see how even their own students can assume leadership roles. As noted, we need not only more students to take leadership roles as Curran has, but we also need to see more parent-child partnerships surrounding digital media and the safe use of the Internet including social media. Many parents/guardians continue to lack knowledge of how their children use social media."

Arzt said she has been impressed by their energy, enthusiasm, dedication and energy. "Curran's TEDTalk was a polished piece of expertise, both content-wise and delivery-wise," she said. "We need more kids like Curran with positivity and leadership to make this a better, more positive world for all of us. Both continue to pursue the goal of teaching kids and helping educators and parents understand the power of social media and how to use the resource at our fingertips for social good."

Matthew J. Ross, director of technology for Farmington Public Schools, has sought input from Marialice and Curran, who was scheduled to take part in a program there in November.

"We had an idea of the type of audience and topics we wanted to cover based on parent, student, and teacher surveys," he said. "We plan to hold three parent forums this year focused around the technology our students are using. What most impressed us about digcitkids is the emphasis on using the technology tools for a positive result. All too often, it is the negative aspects that receive the attention, and cause teachers, parents, and even kids to shy away from not only the technology, but the conversation about appropriate uses. The approach that Dr. Curran and her team bring to the topics of digital citizenship, social media, and technology use dovetails nicely with the vision of the Farmington graduate. We provide the tools and environment that allows our students to become responsible, collaborative, global citizens."

Along with his mother, Curran is encouraging children and adults to learn together and to use social media for the common good. "When kids are passionate about creating change, they need to learn with the world. That happens digitally," he said.

"I think even kids in elementary school should be able to have a voice and be able to make connections beyond the classroom walls." GL

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Courtesy photo

'Little Big Sister'

Author hopes to help siblings of children with special needs

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Amy McCoy, the author of a new children's book, "Little Big Sister," is a former elementary school teacher who began writing for children in the 1990s. She and her family recently moved from Glastonbury to her hometown of Garden City because her husband was transferred to New York City. She has worked as a family support coordinator with the Connecticut Family Support Network, a nonprofit whose mission is to help families raising children with disabilities navigate the world of special education. She enjoys teaching yoga, exercising, spending time with her family and friends, and reading books – with and without pictures. She is the mother of two children, Matthew and Kathryn, and writes a blog titled Dancing in the Rain about parenting a child with disabilities.

Q. What inspired "Little Big Sister"?

A. This book is largely based on my own family's real life experiences. I have two children: Matthew is 12 and Kathryn is 10. Matthew has autism and some other co-existing diagnoses. His autism affects his development, behavior and social awareness. Kathryn has been a true-life "little big sister" to her older brother for her whole life. Many of the scenes in the book have actually happened, and some are imagined, but all are based on the realities that families like mine face when raising a child with a disability.

Q. Why was it important to you to write this book?

A. As my daughter was getting older, it became clear to me that she needed a way to process her own relationship with her older

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brother. When she was younger, around five or six years old, some examples of her innocent questions to me were, "Why can I ride a two-wheeler and Matthew can't? He's older than me." Another example, "Why do I take the bus to school, but Matthew takes the van?"

I knew I had to find a way to help her process these questions and to find answers that made sense for her at whatever age she was asking.

Her questions now at age 10 are more focused on the future such as, "Will Matthew ever get married? Will he be a dad one day? Will he go to college?" They are all great conversations and will find a place in book number two or even book number three!

I am just starting to work on book two. I am keeping a list of ideas to include in the book, and I always run them by my daughter. They are usually things that happen in our everyday lives, and I will pause and ask her, "Do you think that should be in the next book?" She usually says yes.

For book two, the focus will be on how the family moves to a new town and the main character, Katie, based on my daughter, feels as if she has to start all over again, teaching classmates and neighbors about her brother. There will be a twist of some sort.

Some of the daily ideas that occur spontaneously in our real life will be in the book. For example, in the mornings when Matthew is being loud and interrupting our morning routine, I continually tell Kathryn to "just ignore him." Yesterday during the morning routine, I asked her, "Do you think that should be in the book? How Katie's mom tells her to 'just ignore him', and Katie wonders, 'How do you ignore someone so loud?'" My daughter agreed that should be in the book.

Q. Who is your target audience for the book?

A. This book was written for children who are in grade school. It is a third-grade level for both readability and content, and the main character is in third grade in the story. It can be a read aloud for a younger child or as or independent/silent reading for an older child. I have had many adults tell me that it also gave a strong message to them. They felt it was not just a book for children, but for anyone who ever wanted to know what life is like for families living with a child [or] sibling who has a disability.

This book is for all the siblings out there who have a brother or sister with a disability, to feel less isolated, to feel like they are not alone on this journey.

This book is for my daughter's classmates, neighbors and friends, to help them understand better. Just after the book was published, one of my daughter's classmates was over for an after-school playdate. This particular friend was one of her first friends to read the book. My son was making his loud – embarrassing to my daughter – sounds of enjoyment while reading something on his iPad. My daughter's face was turning red and I could feel how uncomfortable she was. I realized that her friend had already read the book and simply said, "Don't worry, Kathryn. Audrey read our book. She gets it." The redness on her face faded and Audrey quickly agreed, as if proud to be part of the group who understands.

Q. What conversations do you hope to spark with the book?

A. I have had parents tell me that the book has helped them to open conversations with their own children about disabilities, acceptance and awareness.

One parent in particular was grateful for the book since her youngest child was recently diagnosed on the autism spectrum. It gave her a way to open conversations with her older children as they read the book together, one chapter each night.

I hope that people are able to see the positives in each other. One theme throughout the book is to turn "what's wrong" into "what's right," to notice what is right with

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Courtesy photo

Former Glastonbury resident Amy McCoy has written a book called "Little Big Sister." A children's book based on Amy McCoy's own family.

ourselves and with others.

My goal is to make it a series of three books. Also, besides writing a sequel, [I want] to begin doing presentations in elementary schools about character education, using the themes in the book to help students understand how their choices impact others.

I'd like to work with schools to enhance their current character education curriculum. I'd like my message to focus on integrity and what that can mean to elementary age students. I have some ideas brewing! Prior to becoming an author and working for CTFSN, I was an elementary school teacher for 12 years, so I have some professional experience in this area.

Q. What was the process of doing the book?

A. It took me about two years from start to finish to write this book. I would work on it for a few hours one day, then not have time to touch it again for a month. Once I added certain key characters, the story started forming into a children's novel. The book has 22 chapters. Once I was about done with the writing, I asked close friends and family members to help me edit for content and then I hired a professional copy editor for the final editing process.

I asked a talented high school artist, Adriana Tonello, to do my cover illustration. She had done some beautiful artwork for a colleague's book, and she was wonderful to work with. The only illustrations are the cover picture and the recurring pencil drawn picture of the two bikes at the beginning of each chapter. I am extremely pleased with the way the cover turned out. It is exactly what I had imagined.

I used Amazon's publishing arm, CreateSpace. As a previously unpublished author, this was the fastest way to get my message out there without waiting for a publishing company or literary agent to notice my work. That can take years.

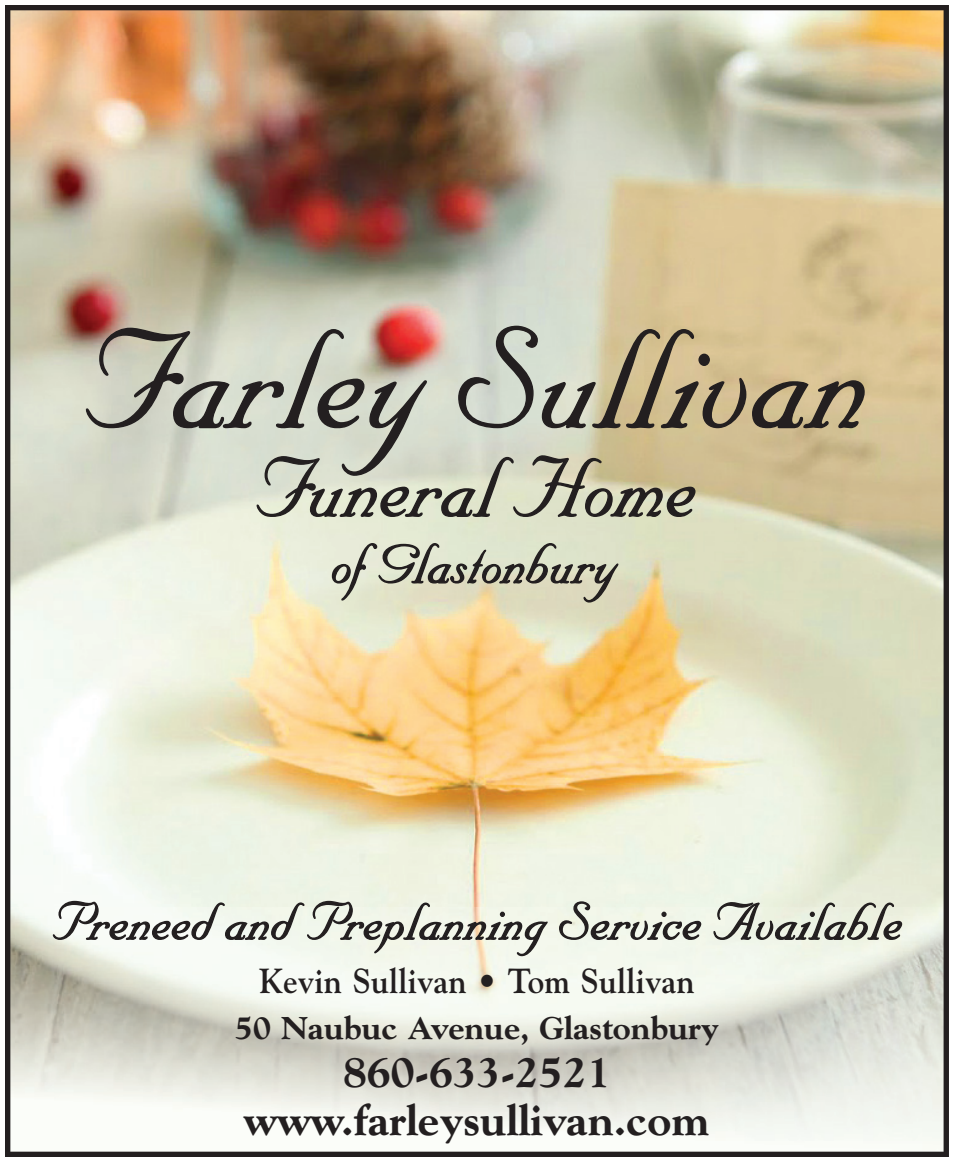
Q. Tell me about your blog.

A. My blog is titled "Dancing in the Rain" and is written to help me process what I go through as a mom to a child with disabilities. My aim in writing it is threefold: to give a glimpse to readers of what life is like raising a child with disabilities; to help other parents raising a child with a disability to feel less isolated and more understood; and to allow me to process my own experiences of motherhood, allowing, accepting and appreciating the differences.

Q. What tips do you have for parents of children with disabilities?

A. Build your network of support. Find other parents who "get it" and stay connected to them. It's so important to have people in your life who understand the daily challenges of raising a child with a disability. **GL**

Learn more at littlebigsisterbook.com.



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People Notes

Local artist **Sarah Schneiderman's** work is on display at the Dehn Gallery at MCC on Main in Manchester through January 6. The show, called REDUX: Everything Old is New Again, features work created from recycled materials or exploring the theme of recycling. The gallery is open Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. It is closed on Sunday. There is no admission. To learn more, visit manchestercc.edu/mcc-on-main.

Members of the Glastonbury High School Class of 1949 gathered recently for a luncheon to celebrate their 67-year reunion. Classmates shown in the photo are, seated, **Rachel Henry Kurt, Frances Tryon Barker, Marjorie Farrell Emerick, Dorothy Halun Preli, Annie Ferry Torrance and Robert Fagnoni, and standing, Daniel Russell, Robert Nystrom, June Bergstrom Moore, Arden Taylor Teveris, Frederick Smith, Alice Cofiell Beebe, George Darby, William Dufford, Francis Preli** and **Louis Preli.**

Cassandra L. T-Pederson and **Jack M. Antico** have been recognized as National Hispanic Scholars for 2016-2017 by the National Hispanic Recognition Program. The two are students at Kingswood Oxford School in West Hartford.

Nine-year-old **Timothy McGuire** will appear in a school boy in Hartford Stage's production of A Christmas Carol. The play runs November 25 through December 30. For details, visit hartfordstage.org.

John J. Vullo has received the Paul Harris Award for 2016 from the Glastonbury Rotary Club. The award recognizes Vullo's continued service to the community. In the photo, Rich Rapp, club president for 2015-2016, presents the award to Vullo. **GL**

Glastonbury High School Class of 1949

Courtesy photos

Jack M. Antico

Cassandra L. T-Pederson

Paul Harris Award for 2016

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Slice of LIFE

photos by Brian Ambrose

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Preschool seasonal decorations

Children at the South Church preschool enjoy making seasonal decorations. **1.** Quinn Seaman paints a beautiful fall picture. **2.** Anelisa Recinos decorates the windows. **3.** Annie Damato helps out with Thanksgiving decorations. **4.** Kellen Schatz is the expert paper chain maker. **5.** McKenna Kneale helps set the festive holiday mood with a basket of flowers. **6.** Mackenzie Hutchinson pieces together Pilgrims. **7.** Alexandra Martas-Mayr carefully places the nose on her art project. **8.** Casey Sowa reaches to place her decoration in the window. **9.** Sofia Ricker gets ready to launch a leaf storm. **10.** Cameron Muzzy creates colorful holiday decorations. **11.** Eva Petrone loves Thanksgiving time.

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Your thoughts

For many people this is a time of year for gratitude. After all, there's a holiday that's pretty much devoted to it! (Well, that and turkey and pumpkin pie!) Glastonbury LIFE was wondering what people are most thankful for this holiday season. Here is some of what you said:

Family. Getting everyone together and spending time with the family.
– Nichole Currie

I am most grateful for my really great friends who have helped me change a negative situation into a positive situation.
–Annette Hainey

Mara Dresner photos

I'm grateful for so many things but mostly for a healthy, happy family and a great place to work (Baribault Jewelers).
– Patty Parent

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

December Events

White House Summit on Educational Excellence. 12/5, 1 p.m., SBMCF Building Auditorium. Presented by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans, the goals for the summit include raising awareness about African American Educational Excellence, successful African American educational initiatives and supporting community engagement by creating opportunities for parents, grandparents, guardians and caring adults to increase the number of African Americans who graduate from high school. To register, go to www.manchestercc.edu/whsummit.

Manufacturing Information Sessions. 12/5, 3 p.m. and 12/16, 10 a.m., LRC B144. The Precision Manufacturing Program is designed to provide students with a valuable skill set in just six months. Students who complete the program are qualified for an entry-level position as a CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machine operator. Students who complete the program earn both a non-credit and credit certificate, and earn up to 30 credits that can be applied toward an associate degree. Info: Dave Russell at 860-512-2635 or email drussell@manchestercc.edu.

Health Careers Admission Information Sessions. 12/6, GPA Community Commons. Students interested in being admitted into a Health Careers credit program must attend a mandatory information session before applying. Info: Theresa Blake at 860-512-2704 or email tblake@manchestercc.edu.

Radiologic Science. 12 p.m.
Occupational Therapy Assistant. 1 p.m.
Dental Assistant. 2 p.m.
Respiratory Care. 3 p.m.

Campus Visit. SSC Atrium. Regional college and university representatives will be on campus to discuss transfer opportunities with interested students. Info: Robert C. Turner, Jr. at 860-512-3328 or email rturner@manchestercc.edu.

University of Saint Joseph. 12/7, 10 a.m.
University of New Haven. 12/7, 10 a.m.
Eastern Connecticut State University. 12/8, 10 a.m.

Winter Arts Festival. 12/16, 6 p.m., SBMCF Auditorium. Featuring the opening reception for the fine art student exhibition, and vocal and musical performances by MCC music students. Info: Susan Classen-Sullivan at 860-512-2693 or email sclassen-sullivan@manchestercc.edu.

All events are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted, and are subject to change without notice. For current information or notices of cancellation, click on "View All Events" on MCC's web site: www.manchestercc.edu.

12/2016

Getting Married?
Let us know!
LIFE is interested in publishing engagement and wedding announcements. Send them to LIFE Editor at 540 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070 or e-mail aalbair@turleyct.com. There is no charge.

News roundup

Chamber plans Italy trip

The CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a trip to Italy in the spring. The trip, which is open to chamber members and others, will include a visit to the Amalfi Coast and visits to Pompeii, Positano, Ravello and the Isle of Capri before ending in Rome. The trip is no rigorous and will include free time. The cost, $2,999 for chamber members and $3,199 for non-members, includes ground transportation to and from JFK Airport. For more information, call the chamber office at 860-659-3587 or send an email to maryellen@crvchamber.org.

Keeping kids safe

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center is teaming up with Toyota and South Glastonbury Fire Department Company # 2 to keep young passengers safe while riding in cars. As part of the Buckle Up for Life program, trained specialists will work with families and caregivers to teach them about car seats, booster seats and seat belts and provide free car seats to families in need.

"Our goal is to improve the health and overall well-being of the people in our community by providing prevention and research initiatives that reduce the occurrence and consequence of violence and injury," said Marisol Feliciano, violence and injury prevention program coordinator at Saint Francis. "By partnering with Buckle Up for Life we will be able to expand the number of car seat safety clinics in more communities."

Researchers have found that many parents install the safety seats incorrectly.

Parents and others who want experts to check their safety seats can call 860-714-5477 to make an appointment to stop in at the South Glastonbury Fire Department Company #2, 905 Main St. on December 19. The session will run from 3:30 to 6 p.m.

The project was made possible by a $32,000 grant from Toyota.

New contract for Johnson

The town council has given Town Manager Richard Johnson a new four-year contract. The agreement includes a 2.25 percent raise this year. Johnson has been town manager since 1993 and has worked for the town since 1980.

Auxiliary helps out again

The Glastonbury Auxiliary of The Village for Families & Children has contributed $108,000 to The Village. The group raises money through its Second Chance Shop, which sells new and gently used clothes, accessories, antiques and collectibles, toys and household items. The three Village auxiliaries, in Glastonbury, Simsbury and Suffield, contributed a total of $259,000 this year. The shop is at 730 Hebron Ave and is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

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New look at Audubon center

The local CT Audubon Center has undergone extensive renovations and improvements, including a more open look, new vinyl floor covering, space for rotating exhibits and a new outdoor aviary for the center's non-releasable raptors.

"It's a work in progress," said Michelle Eckman, the center's director. "We want to emphasize conservation action and citizen science, and we want the space to be conducive to that."

She said the center's store will focus on eco-friendly, sustainable gifts and books. "I want this to be a place where people can make responsible purchases," she said. "I want us to walk the walk."

The new aviary will be home to Cookie, a barred owl who was hit by a car and has unclear vision, Trinity, a red-tailed hawk who lost use of one ear and one eye when hit by a car, and Buddy, a broad-winged hawk who lost part of a wing when hit by a car. Until now, the birds were housed indoors. "This will be much better for them," Eckman said.

The center will celebrate with a grand reopening November 20 from 3 to 5 p.m. **GL**

Lea Shaw, Kasha Breau, Kathy Neville and Michelle Eckman check out the Audubon Center's new outdoor aviary for its non-releasable raptors.

Nancy Thompson photo

NOW WELCOMING NEW PATIENTS

HARTFORD ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS WELCOMES **ARIS D. YANNOPOULOS, MD** TO PRACTICE

Aris D. Yannopoulos, MD

Well known and highly respected throughout Connecticut, Dr. Aris D. Yannopoulos completed Fellowships in both Spine Surgery and Orthopedic Sports Medicine, and currently serves as the Department Chair of Orthopedic Surgery at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

As part of the Hartford Orthopedic Surgeons team, Dr. Yannopoulos will specialize in Spine Surgery – specifically, Lumbar Micro-Discectomy, Laminectomy, and Lumbar and Cervical Fusions – along with Arthroscopic Surgery, Sports Medicine and General Orthopedics.

Dr. Yannopoulos joins John Mara, MD, Robert McAllister, MD and Randall Risinger, MD of Hartford Orthopedic Surgeons and is welcoming new patients at this time. To arrange a consultation, please call us at 860-525-4469.

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December calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

3 **Lighting the town center,** 6 to 7 p.m., Fountain Green, corner of Hebron Avenue and Main Street. Includes refreshments and caroling. Rain will cancel.

4 **Santa's Run 3.5-mile road race, registration** is from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., with the race starting at noon, Glastonbury High School 330 Hubbard St. $15 through noon on December 2 and $20 on the day or the race. Snow date December 11. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov.

Holiday sale, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum on the Green, 1942 Main St. Also December 5, 6, and 8 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and December 10 2 to 6 p.m. Hsgct.org or 860-633-6890.

Glastonbury Chorus in concert, 4 p.m., Smith Middle School auditorium, 216 Addison Rd. Reception follows. $8 for adults, $5 for seniors and students. No charge for children younger than 7 and active-duty service members in uniform. Tickets available at the door or from chorus members.

6 **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

7 **Adult book discussion of Fates and Furies by Lauren Groff**, 7 to 8 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. No charge or registration.

8 **Glastonbury chamber orchestra and Smith Middle School string orchestra in concert**, 7:30 p.m., Smith Middle School, 216 Addison Rd. No charge. Snow date December 12. Glastonburyus.org

The Worlds of Star Wars, 5:30 and 7 p.m., Glastonbury Planetarium, Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School, 95 Oak St. $5. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.glastonburyplanetarium.org.

9 **Christmas on Minnechaug Mountain with Amy Gallatin and the Blackstone Valley Bluegrass Band and special guests,** 7:30 p.m., Buckingham Congregational Church, 16 Cricket Lane. $15 for adults, $5 for children younger than we. Tickets available only at the door, which opens at 6:45 p.m. 860-633-7992 or amygallatin.com.

10 **Holiday House Tour sponsored by the Historical Society of Glastonbury,** 2 to 6 p.m., Main Street. $35 in advance, $40 on the day of the tour. Hsgct.org or 860-633-6890.

12 **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

13 **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

16 **Radio City Christmas Show bus trip**, leaves East Hartford/Glastonbury commuter parking lot at 8 a.m., returns 8:30 p.m., $145. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov.

17 **Genealogy group sponsored by the Welsh Society of Western New England,** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Participants are asked to bring their Welsh family tree and a lunch dish to share. Reserve a spot by emailing WelshWNE@gmail.com. Directions will be forwarded at that time.

Flight Adventures planetarium show, 11 a.m., Glastonbury Planetarium, Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School, 95 Oak St. $5. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.glastonburyplanetarium.org.

20 **Glastonbury High School winter choral concert,** 7:30 p.m., Glastonbury High School, 330 Hubbard St. Snow date December 21. Glastonburyus.org

22 **Winter solstice astronomy workshop,** 6 p.m., Glastonbury Planetarium, Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School, 95 Oak St. $5. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.glastonburyplanetarium.org.

27 **Laser Holidays,** 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Glastonbury Planetarium, Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School, 95 Oak St. $5. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.glastonburyplanetarium.org. Also December 28 and 29.

Laser Floyd: Dark Side of the Moon, 7 p.m., Glastonbury Planetarium, Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School, 95 Oak St. $5. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.glastonburyplanetarium.org. Also December 28 and 29.

Season of Light, 2 p.m., Glastonbury Planetarium, Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School, 95 Oak St. $5. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.glastonburyplanetarium.org. Also December 28 and 29. GL

Business notes

Courtesy photos

Olympic Taekwondo Academy of Glastonbury

Students, parents and staff members at the **Olympic Taekwondo Academy of Glastonbury** raised more than $2,300 for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center during a recent charity event that included the sale of baked goods and other food, a kick-a-thon and a raffle.

Margo Nielson, a real estate agent and member of Margaret Wilcox & Associates of William Raveis, has been named a 5 Star Professional Realtor for the sixth consecutive year.

Cronin & Co. LLC has hired Sarah Morin of West Hartford as a media and analytics association. She has a bachelor's degree in communications with an emphasis in public relations and advertising from the University of Hartford.

Customers at both local **Stop & Shop** stores can sign up online to earn money for local schools through their store loyalty card. The company has donated more than $7 million to public and private schools in New England since

Margo Nielson

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The local **Hallmark store** on Glastonbury Boulevard has been sold to The Paper Store, a family-owned chain of specialty gift stores.

Cronin and Company, LLC, a local full-service independent marketing communications agency, won several awards at this year's annual award show sponsored by the Ad Club | CT. Of the company's 23 awards, four were gold, seven were silver, six were bronze and six were merit awards.

The gold awards included the following: "Marie," a radio commercial for the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services; "Cathy, a video/DVD for the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services; "To the Last Derp" a consumer poster for the Stubborn Beauty Brewing Company; and "Find Your Confident Place, a series of banner/display ads for Liberty Bank.

Bicycles East has been named one of America's best bike shops for 2016 by the National Bicycles Dealers Association for the fourth consecutive year and has been designated as the first and only Trek-certified service center in New England.

The "best bike shops" award considers a store's community support, bicycles advocacy and expertise. The Trek designation rewards a service center for customer service, top-notch procedures and the work of highly skilled mechanics.

Bicycles East, at 331 New London Turnpike is owned by town residents Steve and Deb Dauphinais. To learn more, call 860-659-0114, send an email to info@BicyclesEast.com or visit BicyclesEast.com. GL

Beth Emery, Nate "Mick" McOuat, Nate Clapp, John Addario, Deb Dauphinais, Steve Dauphinais from Bicycles East

Courtesy photos

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Tommy

Tommy is a 4-month-old bunny who is sweet and loves to be cuddled. He is neutered and mixed breed and likes children as long as they are gentle with him. Other animals in the home are OK as long as they are not aggressive. Tommy needs to get out of his cage at least a little bit each day for supervised play and exercise.

Spook

Spook is an affectionate black domestic shorthair cat who is approaching her fifth birthday. She enjoys a moderate level of activity and would benefit from an active environment. She is OK with children of any age and willing try her luck with other pets. Spook is strictly an indoor cat.

Inquiries about adoption may be made at the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington. Call 860-594-4500. More information, including videos, can be found online at cthumane.org. Click on "Adopt" and "Newington." The Connecticut Humane Society is a private organization and has no time limits for adoption. **GL**

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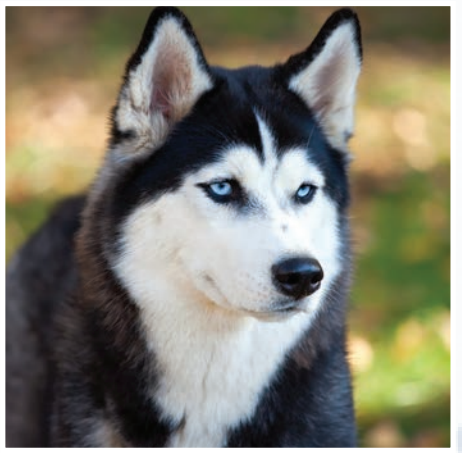

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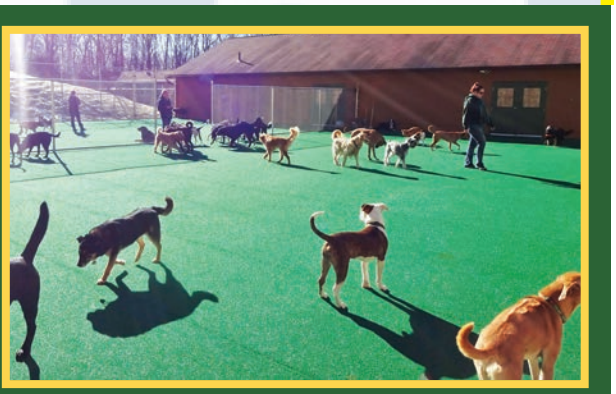

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Note from Nancy

The Best. Cat. Ever.

Photo by Nancy Thompson

Our beloved little Cozette, who adopted us as a tiny kitten more than 20 years ago, has died. We knew it was coming, but that didn't make it any easier. We stroked her to the very end.

I was looking through her files later and came across something she wrote – yes, kitties can do that very well – and I'd like to use this space to share it with you. It appears to be her autobiography.

"I took over their house more than 20 years ago. The tall ones were kind, and the place was much nicer than the fraternity house in Worcester where I was born. I was a beautiful kitten: fluffy and totally adorable in all ways.

Life was fun. I had drapes to climb, a big bed to share and lots of birds and small mammals to terrorize outside. I trained the tall ones well over the years, and they doted on me and gave me everything I wanted – treats like whipped cream and real chicken, and toys, cuddles and oodles of love.

When their young became tall ones themselves and moved away, I cranked up the charm and had them at my beck and call even more, and they finally acknowledged me as their queen.

A few years ago we moved and they put me under house arrest. I really missed going outside and hunting and I tried to escape a couple of times, but they caught me, muttering something about cars and fisher cats, which must be some new breed. Didn't they understand that I was the hunter, not the hunted?

I got used to it, although I still liked to sniff the outdoors through the screen door when I could. On the plus side, I had great places to nap – my very own red blanket on the comfy new recliner in the living room, a blue puff in the family room, a warm cable box with just the right amount of space on top, a big bed and the chairs in their home offices.

One day, when I was 19, they took me to a horrible place where people wearing funny clothes poked at me and stuck me with needles. All of a sudden I couldn't have my favorite crunchy treats anymore and I had to eat icky special "kidney diet" food, sometimes with a pill crushed up in it. How stupid did they think I was? Those of us who know how to handle ourselves outside never eat food that has something hiding in it because it could be poisoned. I stopped eating and eventually they got the hint. They found some food that tasted better and got rid of the pills, but I just wasn't all that hungry.

Mostly I was tired. They came up with a new plan and started squirting medicine down my throat every few days. I craved food and meowed a lot, especially in the middle of the night, just to be sure they remembered to feed me.

They seemed happier. I started spending more and more time taking catnaps in my places, or on their laps or with them in their big bed.

It was hard to clean myself well, so they kept having the needle-place people cut my beautiful long fur. Pretty soon I looked like Grizabella from "Cats," which of course is my favorite musical. But they still loved me, and I loved them. Life was good, but I was very, very tired.

Lately, I've been even more tired. My mouth hurts when I eat and I heard the needle guy in the funny suit say something about a tumor, whatever that is. They've been giving me more medicines, but I just want to sleep, and sleep and sleep some more. If I was a tall one like them, I'd be 97. It's time to let go. I hope they understand."

We do, Coz. Our hearts are broken, but we do. We'll always love you and we'll never forget the joy you brought to our lives for so many years.

– Nancy Thompson

glastonbury LIFE

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BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]

Winter storm names...

If you've lived in Connecticut long enough, you'll remember Blizzard Larry, the Blizzard of '78. Or, perhaps the big ice storm of December 1973 named Felix. More recently, we had to deal with Storm Alfred in late October of 2011 when heavy, wet snow caused a record power outage in Connecticut. And, it was Blizzard Charlotte that dumped up to 40" of snow on the state in 2013. Yes, people remember names, especially the ones that have been attached to Connecticut's biggest winter storms.

Naming winter storms is something unique to WFSB and dates back to the days of the Travelers Weather Service in 1971, with a team of meteorologists broadcasting weather information on Channel 3 and other media outlets. It's a tradition our station is proud to carry on here in the state of Connecticut – now 45 years later!

In order for a storm to get a name, it has to meet certain criteria: we must expect at least 6" of snow for much of the state, and/or ½" of ice accretion (that would be a significant ice storm).

When it comes to the list of names, we like a good theme – previously we've done "current day chart toppers" ...and "former First Ladies" ...this year, we're going with notable sports figures with ties to Connecticut. **GL**

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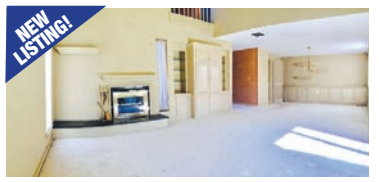

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